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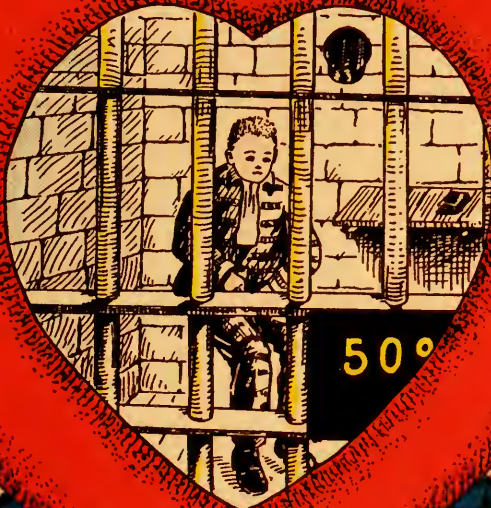
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PUBLISHED BY
 THE HUMANE WORKERS' SOCIETY
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PRISON POEMS



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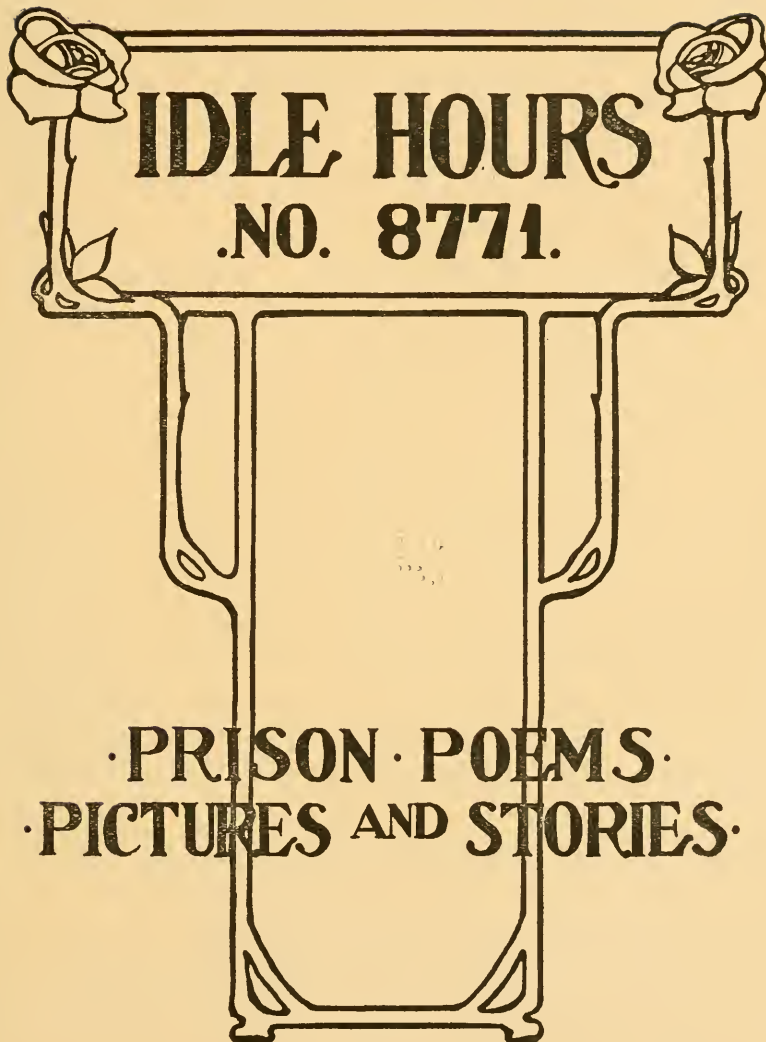
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Edward L. Allen



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PRISON POEMS, PICTURES AND STORIES

PREFACE AND EXPLANATION.

A man is selfish who devotes all his time to expressing his own feelings. A great Painter or Poet is selfish if he devotes his entire time to expressing his feelings on canvas or in verse. We owe the world something beside self-delineated feelings and our friends, we owe them all—

What care I for worldly gain
For me alone a crust will do
Should I some power or wealth attain
Dear friend—'twill be for you.

The author of these little poems and pictures is quite aware of their crudeness, nor does he intend devoting his time to the like—there are other things too well worth while—

These little poems and painted flowers*
Are but the product of my idle hours;
Far greater things have I in view
And having will the aim pursue.
So you may laugh and turn away,
But I—perhaps will laugh another day.

* In printing the book the expense of reproducing the flowers was too great.

PRISON POEMS.

AN APPEAL AND A STORY.

This little book not only contains poems but information on the subject at hand. Somehow I feel that you will be interested in this subject.

Never have the American people been given anything so different from the ordinary line of reading matter. Not that it is better written or classic, but because of its simplicity and sincerity. The writer feels that the expression is somewhat crude. It is an honest effort of a convict to better his condition while still in prison and his struggle after his discharge.

It deals with the terrible condition and odds the writer had to fight against in order to survive and live up to a good moral standard. It touches on the awful condition in our prisons and in some measure my change your conception of the man behind the bars.

The writer earnestly begs you to co-operate with him in circulating this little work.

When you write to your friends won't you tell them about the little book and "The Humane Workers' Society" which aims to better the awful condition that endangers our homes and lives and the future welfare of our children?

Won't you help me start this movement by passing the word around among your friends? I want to make amend for the past and I can do it better by bettering the condition you all know to exist in every city and town in America—that leads the boys and girls astray; to disgrace and shame.

I do not look for any reward either in this world or the next one. I seek to make amend. My reward will be in doing good because it's good to do good.

The greatest pleasure of my life is in helping the poor deluded boys and girls who wander away from home seeking that which they can never find apart from that home, and, failing, become despondent and seek relief in that awful life that leads to prison and ill-fame.

Then there are the boys and girls who have no home, who are cast out into the cold world at an early age to struggle alone, to sink or swim.

Oh, how my heart goes out to these children of misfortune—I was one of them. I can feel as they feel and have suffered as they suffer. Every one would have been better boys and girls had some one cared for them.

Won't you help me help them? You who have comfortable homes and loved ones. They might have been your dear ones. This little

PRISON POEMS.

book is my only means of getting my message to you. Won't you send the message along to others? It will be so much easier than the way I have had to go in order that I may send the message out to you.

You have organizations, societies and churches and they are doing good, but don't you think one who has been down in the places of those you seek to aid, and who has risen up, can do more to raise these wayward children. Knowing the conditions that made them what they are, do you not think the writer can do more to remove them than people who never suffered—who cannot feel and understand?

I wish I could send every person in the world one of these little books, but I am poor. Many, many days the little girl (who has sacrificed so much for me) and I have gone hungry and slept cold. She gave up a home of luxury and wealth to share my lot and help me in my work.

It is through the good will of a few generous hearted people that I am able to furnish you with this little book. Won't you help them in helping me to help others?

Let me tell you a little story, and if any one doubts it, I will refer them to an institution that will substantiate it, at least in part, if not all.

The little fellow I mention had been kicked out into the cold world one evening in early Spring to shift for himself at the age of twelve.

For days he wandered about in the woods and country, working where he could for something to eat, often without food for two days at a time; sleeping where he could—in barns or straw stacks.

One evening he strayed into a little town hungry and cold. It had been raining and the little fellow was soaked through. At a baker shop some kind lady had given him some rolls. With the bag of rolls tucked under his little wet coat he wandered down the street till he found a hallway that offered him the shelter he sought. Here he would spend the evening. Outside the storm came up in all its fury. As he sat eating his rolls he heard a whining, then a yelp from the street. In a moment the little fellow was out in the rain. Somehow he knew it was a cry of distress.

Oh, my dear readers, whatever you may think of this story will not change its truth. 'Tis true I have elaborated in its telling, but could you see the little boy as he reaches down into the gutter and picks up that poor little puppy-dog that was battling with the wind and rain, hungry and cold—so weak it could not crawl out of the gutter. Half drowned and starved he carried it into the hallway.

Oh, how he nestled it to his little lonely heart. It was just a tiny thing, only a few weeks old, but it was a creature in distress and he

PRISON POEMS.

shared his rolls. The poor little puppy was so weak from hunger that it could not swallow and choked. The little boy had to put his finger in the little fellow's throat and remove the half-chewed bread. Like a mother feeds her baby, and as tender, did the little twelve year old boy chew the pieces of rolls first and give it to the pup, so that he could swallow it.

As they lay together in the hallway, the boy could feel his little companion shiver. The hall was good enough for him, but his friend was cold and they must find some warmer place to sleep. So he took the little fellow in his arms and wandered out into the rain. In an alley he found a barndoor unlocked. Softly he crept in. It was dark, but he found the manger and there he and his little friend curled up and were soon asleep; nor was it so uncomfortable either. But the man came and found them in the morning. He kicked the little boy and dog out into the alley.

That man was meaner than that little boy ever was and he has been in prison twice and deserved to go there both times—tho' I do expect the man deserved to go there instead, for he was responsible for the boy's going there.

That man professed to be a Christian and if he is living now and should run across this little book, I wish to say—You were an old hypocrite and it's your kind that make conditions that make criminals.

A man don't steal for the fun of it. Neither does he steal because he likes to steal. He steals by force of circumstances and certain conditions make these circumstances, and certain kinds of society and people make these conditions.

Would Christ kick a little orphan boy and dog out into an alley because he slept in a manger? No, and he won't let an old hypocrite spend eternity in paradise who wouldn't let a little boy and dog sleep in a manger.

What I tell you is the truth, though it may be expressed in a crude way. I haven't meant to bore you, and instead of telling you my life's history in this little book, I present you with little pictures, poems and sketches of life—hoping it will change your conception of those behind the bars and those living lives of ill fame.

After all they are our brothers and sisters and though we may not help them so much, we can better conditions that made them so and make the way clearer for the coming generations.

Won't you help me in this work? Won't you tell your friends about this little book?

Very sincerely,

EDWARD L. ALLEN,
The Humane Workers' Society, Erie, Pa.

P. S.—I was the little boy.

PRISON POEMS.

JUST A CHILD.

'Twas just a child
That came and smiled—
Smiled through the steel-chilled bars;
The smile it stole
Into my soul,
There beams like a thousand stars.

This child of love
Like the stars above,
With its beaming, smiling face,
So sweet and kind,
Shall ever find
In my heart a resting place.

Ever as I dwell
In my dreary cell
My thoughts shall be of you,
Sweet little child
That came and smiled,
With eyes so soft and blue.

PRISON POEMS.

AN EXPLANATION—A MAN AND A DOG.

This little child accomplished more with a smile than all the laws and religions in this world did by force and superstition—caused me to think; awoke in me the good there is in every man. Reformed me.

What that smile did for me, it will do for thousands in our prisons today—I know, I was there. I once thought and felt as these men do. I know their longings, emotions and desires. Hundreds would never have become convicts had some one cared.

A smile, a kind word or a letter from some one, would do what the Law, the Church and society have not and cannot do—make good citizens of these men.

A man who was electrocuted for murder in Columbus, Ohio, and who was once a prison mate of mine, said to me: "Tomorrow I shall be free, but what have I to live for, not even a yellow dog cares for me. I never knew a mother or a father. No one ever loved me. Once a lady who passed through the county jail spoke to me and smiled. God, how I loved that woman! it is the only thing I have had to hold on to during these long years. Tomorrow I'm free! I shall go to work, and if they will let me, be a man. He tried. He worked like a slave. He had one little friend, a stray dog he had picked up on the streets.

One night some one was held up and robbed—he had been sent to prison for a similar crime. The police discovered his past. He was innocent, but that did not matter. Circumstances were against him. He had two hundred and forty dollars. The man had been robbed of three hundred dollars. He lived in a house with only his little friend, the dog.

He was sent to prison again. Before he was taken away, he requested to see his "little friend." The police laughed at him.

The night he was arrested the little dog had followed him to the police station and hung about until the police had given it to the "Dog Catcher," who drowned it.

So when he asked to see his little friend, they told him, "Why, it hung around here till we got tired of it, and we sent it to the pond."

PRISON POEMS.

That man became a confirmed criminal in less than a minute.
When he was discharged from prison, he went out with murder in
his heart.

He was electrocuted for killing some police official in Ohio and I
believe had killed several before they caught him.

He died with a smile on his face, and his last thought was for
his little friend—the stray dog.

On the walls of his cell they found written in lead pencil:

"I loved you, oh I loved you, and I have avenged your death—
soon I will join you in the great unknown. You were but a dog but
you were dearer to me than any human being I ever knew. I know
you waited outside the police station for me. Your little heart was
loyal till death. You died for me and so I shall die for you. If there
is a God in Heaven He is a just God and I believe we shall meet
again.
From 'JIMMY' to PAL."

I knew this man and what the world may think I care not. In
my eyes he shall always remain a hero. Not because he murdered
several human beings—that was wrong—but because he died for a
friend. His mind was misdirected and wrong—terribly so. That same
something which caused Paul Jones to lash himself to the mast, was
the same something that caused this man to die for his little friend.

I shall treasure this man's memory because of his loyalty and fine
spirit shown in the words written upon the walls of his death chamber.

"By your faith you shall be saved." If there is a Heaven beyond
this earth and any of us ever get there, we shall find a man and a dog.

Those evening stars, those evening stars,
I watch from behind the prison bars,
And as they gleam from their far-off clime
I know, I know it's Christmas time;
Christmas time, but not for those
Behind the iron barred gate;
Once within few find repose
And no one knows his fate.

PRISON POEMS.

THE FACE IN CHAPEL.

One look from your bright eyes,
Sweet maiden fair,
Has stole into my heart
And laid a treasure there.

Before you came all was dark
Within my lonely cell,
But now it is a heavenly place,
Whereas it was a Hell.

No words spoke those charming lips,
Nor would I have them speak,
But fain would paint upon my heart
The rosebuds on your cheek.

Your hair, all waving, golden bright,
Your eyes, so heavenly blue,
Engrave upon my famished heart
An image fair of you.

And oh, fair maid, if you but knew
How longs my starving heart,
Our flitting souls that came so near
Would never stray apart.

And as I dwell, sweet maiden fair,
Within my walled abode
Sweet thoughts of you shall ease the weight
Of my remorseful load.

My aching, famished heart doth pine
For you fair maiden sweet,
And while I wish we'd never met
I pray that we may meet.

And now, fair maid, somewhere doth dwell
A soul that matcheth mine,
And sweet maid if you but knew
That soul it may be thine.

AN EXPLANATION.

The "Face in Chapel" was written after religious services one Sunday morning in the author's lonely cell. It expresses the longing,

PRISON POEMS.

burning desire of a lonely heart for a little human kindness—a little love.

There she was, the new organist, a beautiful girl with her sweet young soul shining out from kind blue eyes.

Those eyes did more to reform the prisoners in that dreary old prison than all its laws and rules ever did.

Men who had been unruly, men the guards could not control, became as meek as lambs. Every one had something to look forward to—the Sunday services and the Face in Chapel.

OH, FREEDOM DAYS.

Oh freedom days,
Sweet freedom days,
How in my heart your treasure lays,
And round my life your memory clings,
Sweet hope of love and freedom brings
Of better life and better things,
Sweet freedom days,
Oh, freedom days,
How in my heart your treasure lays.

Oh, sunny rays,
Sweet sunny rays,
Reminding me of freedom days
In woodland bowers of shady trees,
Waving in the summer's breeze,
Oh, let me feed my soul on these
Sweet sunny rays,
Oh, Sunny rays,
Reminding me of freedom days.

Liberty, how sweet,
Oh, how sweet;
Without thee life is not complete,
Goal of every toiling slave,
Hope of every fettered knave,
Without thee I would gladly brave
The shadow of a dreaded grave.
Oh, how sweet,
Liberty, how sweet;
Without thee life is not complete.

PRISON POEMS.

TO A FRIEND.

The morn is fair, the sun is bright,
Each little tiny ray
Peeps in to help me write
The words I cannot say.

But, while I cannot speak, my friend,
My heart and hands are free;
And so with "hope" I gladly sent
This down to Fifty-three.

And oh, my friend, could I impart
One little word of cheer
To ease the aching of your heart,
'Twill make my own less drear.

The greatest tribute I can pay
To you, my dearest friend,
Is to help you wile the hours away
That seem to have no end.

To help dispel the silent gloom
Around your lonely cell,
And call to mind the sweet perfume
Of some fair flowery dell.

To take you, tho' but in a dream,
Far from the clanging bell
And wander by some woodland stream
With some fair, bonny belle.

And oh, my friend, your sunny smile
Doth make my heart beat glad,
And midst the gloom, the low and vile,
It cheers me when I'm sad.

Could you command a golden tide
To flow beneath my tread,
I'd gladly cast the gold aside
And take the smile instead.

PRISON POEMS.

YET, I AM FREE.

Tho' I may sad and longing dwell
An occupant of a lonely cell,
Where clangs the prison bell
And men bid hope farewell,
 Yet, I am free.

Free to roam at large and will
In woodlands cool and still,
Or down some sloping hill
Where winds the rippling rill
 Towards the sea.

Or linger by some farm and gaze
Across the ripening fields of maize,
Where beams the soothing sunny rays
Enjoying life a thousand ways—

 For I am free;
Or hide me in some shady nook
Beside some sparkling running brook,
With pole and line or pipe and book,
Fast beating heart and eyes that look
 And fondly see.

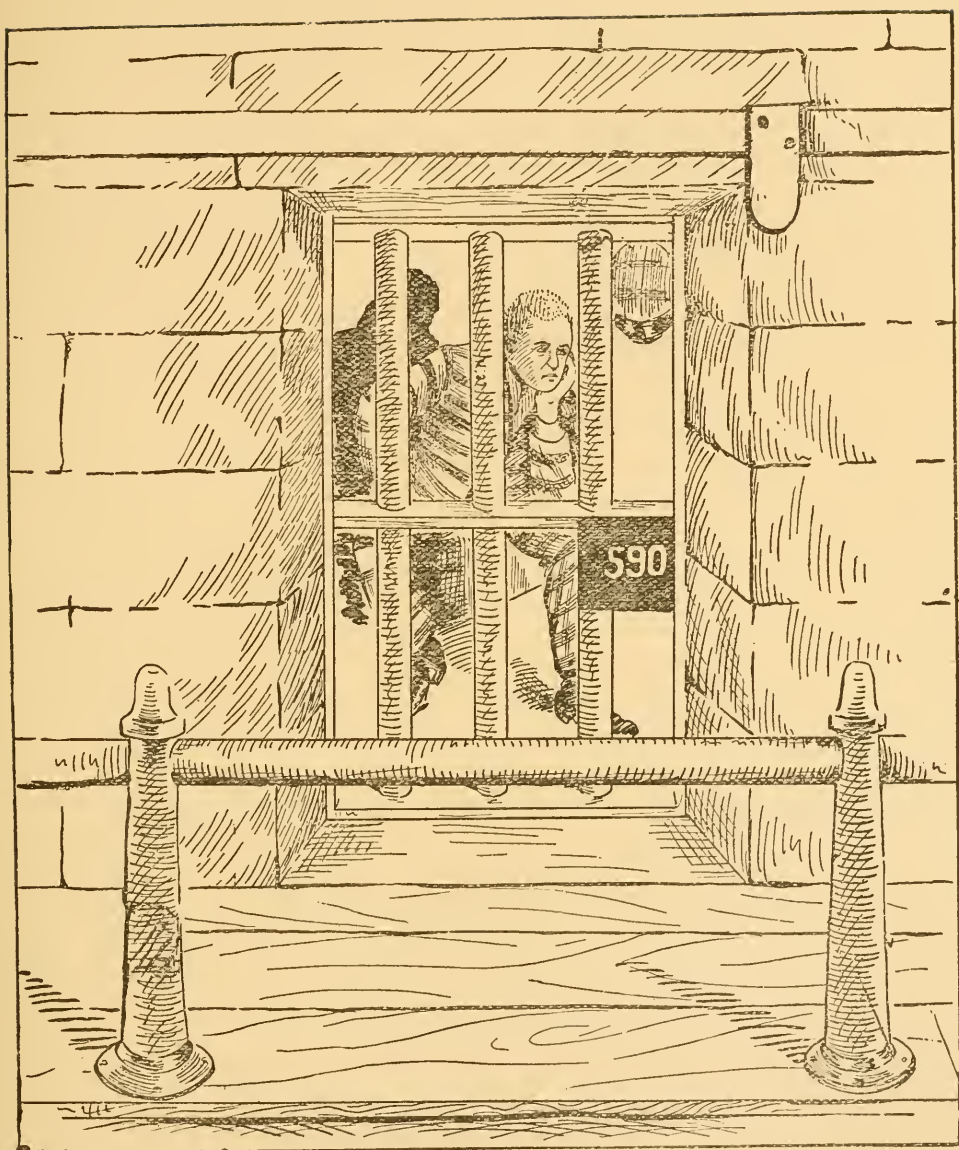
Free to roam this glorious earth,
To get from life what life is worth,
And love the mother that gave me birth,
Greeting friends with friendly mirth,
 And they greet me;

P R I S O N P O E M S .

Clang, clang, sounds the prison bell,
Echoing the awfulness of its knell
To every crouching prisoner's cell,
Where all is dark and life is Hell,
Yet, I am free.

Free, ah, you cannot understand
Why bolts and bars respond to my command
Why walls fade or turn to crumbling sand
And flowers spring forth on every hand
To greet me ;
Why I escape my living tombs
Leaving behind the prison gloom
And bask in sun and sweet perfume
Where maidens walk and flowers bloom
To meet me.

My keepers—and fine fellows, they,
With suits of blue and hats of grey,
Shake their heads and sadly say,
“We'll give the fool another day
With the rules” ;
Clang, clang, that awful sound
Breaks the silence all around,
My Keepers—they so gaily gowned—
Stretch their limbs and look profound—
Ah, poor fools !
I care not how much fun they make,
Nor why they laugh at me—
I'll keep on pounding till I wake
The God of Liberty.



PRISON POEMS.

POEM TO A FRIEND.

Time has no beginning nor has an end—
 'Tis ever on the fly—
And if we'll but hope and wait, dear friend,
 Some day we'll say good-bye.
Good-bye to the lonely prison cell,
 Where life at its best is drear,
Where walls and bars turn earth to Hell,
 And bravest hearts to fear.
But, dear friend, we'll not give up,
 Tho' time we cannot haste;
Ere long we'll sip life from another cup
 That has no bitter taste.
Ah, life is swet, dear friend, ah, sweet,
 When free to live and love
The friends that you and I shall meet
 Where skies are blue above.

OUR FLAG OF HOPE.

I look out through the cold steel prison bars
 O'er the hills of pain and toil,
And there see shining like the Heavenly stars
 A flag of hope on freedom's soil.
And oh, my friend, that flag of Hope
 It waves for you and mee
As we go toiling up the slope
 That leads to liberty.
And dear friend, tho' the way be drear,
 Don't let your heart give way,
But think of the future fair and clear
 The dawning of a brighter day.
Ah, think when first the rising sun
 Beams on our flag of Hope and cheer,
'Tis then, dear friend, the battle's won
 And we've no more to fear.
Our flag of Hope, dear friend, is love,
 Love of home and liberty—
All nature beneath the stars above
 That shine on you and me.

PRISON POEMS.

TO MY FRIENDS IN FIFTY-THREE.

The truth, dear friends, are in these words,
I was punished for feeding the little birds
 Around by lonely cell.
Although my own meals are scant and spare,
With these little friends the crumbs I always share
 And for this kind act I suffer Hell.
But there, I'll not give way, but all the firmer be,
And while I cannot feed the birds, I'll love the more
 My friends in Fifty-three.

Ah, dear friends in Fifty-three,
I wonder if you thought of me,
 Hanging to the iron-barred door.
No keener pain can human feel
Than when wrists are bound with band of steel
 And all is silence and your heart is sore;
But there, dear friends on Gallery Two,
All the while I thought of you.

Altho' my weary flesh and bone
Were incased in iron and steel and stone
 My heart and mind were free;
So while the irons bound each aching wrist
My mind pierced through the gloomy mist
 To my friends in Fifty-three;
Ah, dear friends, don't let your heart give way,
Be thankful for the prospect of a brighter day.

But come, dear friends, let's cheat them all—
The lonely cell, the shackles, the prison wall—
 We're off on freedom's wing
To where the air is cool and pure and sweet,
Where flowers grow and lovers meet,
 And wild birds sing;

Ah, dear friends, tho' hard our lot may seem,
We make it all the easier when we dream.

So come, let's dream we're free—
You leave behind old Fifty-three,
 I'll cast the irons away;
We're off to where the fragrant, sweet perfume
Comes from the flowers as the bloom,
 And it's a sunny summer's day;
But ah, dear friends, this wretched woe
Is but a shadow on the pleasures we'll really know.

PRISON POEMS.

SHE MEANT THE KISSES.

O'er the wall and to my lonely cell
Comes the fragrance of some flowery dell
To tell me spring is here with its balmy breeze
To clothe in green the fields and trees.
Ah, well I recall the pastures green
With lanes and woodlands in between
Where waving in the meadows, to and fro,
The goldenrods and thistles grow,
Where Johnny-jump-ups—ah, surely "Fay,"
You remember hearing some dear maiden say
Now "Fay Up"—that wasn't square,
I won't play unless you play fair—
Seems queer that I should know all this
How, when she stooped to pluck another you stole a kiss.
Well, in those days, you see, we both were boys,
And I suppose what we do in Maine you do in Illinois.
At any rate, I know I used to cheat,
And no kiss since then was half so sweet;
You know each purple stemless head
Stood for a kiss or a stick of gum instead.
Well, I remember on one occasion, when
I had sixty-two and she had ten;
And of course, because I had the largest sum
I thought I wouldn't have to buy the chewing gum;
You understand, dear friend, of course you do,
After buying her ten, I'd still have fifty-two;
Well, this shows I didn't know these country Misses—
She spunks right up and says, "you take your kisses,"
And when I had reached the total sum,
She says, "come on and buy the chewing gum."
Now, don't laugh, dear friend, I swear 'tis true,
Every word I've been telling you;
And when I had left her at her mother's door
She turns and says, "I'm sorry it wasn't fifty more."
Well, perhaps you'll think me rather dumb
When I say I thought she meant the chewing gum;
But then, I didn't know these country Misses—
She didn't mean the gum at all—she meant the kisses.

PRISON POEMS.

EXPLANATION AND A STATEMENT.

These little poems written to my prison friends are the products of certain prison conditions and the peculiar states of mind one gets into who longs to expand—to do something—to rise above his surroundings.

Often I have longed to pour out my pent up feelings to some one, but I could not speak; so I wrote one of these little rhymes and threw it down to one of these prison friends as he passed my cell going to his work. In return I would receive a sunny smile or a hand wave. Somehow the smile and hand wave of one of these fellow sufferers would impart a spirit that would lighten my burden.

Naturally your idea of a convict is something brutal—something to be dreaded and to be hounded like a wolf.

I have met with the sweetest natures, the finest feelings and the greatest loyalty in a prison cell. No where else have I found such rare examples of brotherly love—self-sacrifice and good will. The moral standard of the convict is higher than those who guard him.

The author of these lines was caught feeding the little hungry sparrows in front of his cell and was hung up by the wrists with only bread and water to eat twice a day. He had to hang up twelve hours a day for several days and all for a humane act.

The Warden and Deputy Warden approved of this treatment and yet the thought of the Church, the Law and Society was to reform—to develop these humane acts. You don't believe my statement. I can prove it.

The little poem, crude no doubt, "To My Friends in Fifty-three," was composed while the author was hanging to the iron door he mentions above.

Good English will not permit me to tell you of the horrors of that prison. The terrible crimes against nature of which the management approved. Men were murdered and driven insane. Some who were not insane were even put in the "Crazy House" which was attached to the prison.

If ever there was a Hell it was the Foundry of that prison. Men have cut off their own fingers and hands to escape its horrors. 'Tis true. I can prove it.

The better your conduct, the longer you were detained, if you were a good worker, in this prison.

The Law sent you there, they released you when they wanted to. If you had money or influence you could gain your freedom in eleven months. Many an innocent man has served twenty years, even life, because he had no money or friends. Many who had robbed banks of thousands of dollars were released in a year or two; some in eleven

PRISON POEMS.

months. And these "big thieves" never had anything to do but lie around, eat in the guard's kitchen and smoke good cigars. 'Tis true. I can prove it.

The above statement is not made in a spirit of envy or jealousy, for the author himself did not do two months' work during the five years he served.

These are plain statements and only a few of the horrors are mentioned. I have told nothing hardly to what I might tell. I wish to reserve my space for something that will not grate so much upon your nerves.

In closing, let me state further—I am not condemning all prison officials. Nor am I speaking well of all convicts.

My little poems, "Why Should Man Fear Man" and "Ruling Art and Detention," will explain much I have not mentioned in these lines.

Here is a clipping from a daily newspaper which is a parallel case to mine, showing how hard a struggle a man has who has been in prison:

EDDIE GUERIN'S THRILLING STORY.

Special to The Herald.

LONDON, Feb. 17.—The way of the ex-crook in England is hard. If you doubt it, go to the little tobacco and candy store in the East End of London kept by a man who calls himself "Bertram Morton" and ask him.

"Morton" is Eddie Guerin, who several years ago startled the world by his sensational escape from Devil's Island, the lonely, fever-ridden and shark sentinelled spot of land off the northern coast of South America which for so many years was the scene of Captain Dreyfus's martyrdom. Since then Guerin has been trying to live straight; but he will tell you that society has conspired against him, and you will almost believe it. Acting on the theory of once a crook, always a crook, Scotland Yard has been dogging him. His former associates of the under-world have turned their hands against him, and his every act that could be construed in the least degree suspicious has been reported to the authorities.

If Guerin's protestations of leading an honest life were untrue, it seems that he would have been trapped before this. Scotland Yard thought it had him recently. Detectives who had trailed him to Glasgow, where he had gone to sell some moving picture films, which business he has taken up as a side line, arrested Guerin on the charge of loitering about the Central Station Hotel in that city "with intent to steal." But the testimony didn't hold water. After hearing Guerin's story, the magistrate promptly dismissed him. The ex-crook did not

PRISON POEMS.

try to gloss over his past, but he succeeded in persuading the court that he was sincere in his efforts to live it down.

"Do not permit my previous bad reputation to weigh with you," he pleaded. "Don't turn me back. This means so much to me. I have found it very hard to reform; do not undo it all. I challenge Scotland Yard to prove that I have been associating with a single suspicious character since my escape."

So Guerin is back in his little shop, and has again taken up the struggle—with Scotland Yard still watching him.

Guerin, in company with the notorious "Chicago May," had already achieved considerable fame as an international crook when he was arrested in 1901 for burglarizing the American Express Company's office in Paris. Condemned to penal servitude, he endured the miseries of Devil's Island until 1905, when, with two other convicts, he succeeded in escaping by night in a dug-out. So rough was the sea that one of his companions while standing up to look for the coast line, lost his balance and fell overboard. A shark devoured the unfortunate man before Guerin could attempt his rescue. Reaching Dutch Guiana, Guerin and the other convict lived in the forest for six weeks, then, half-starved, made their way to Georgetown, where Guerin found a friend who supplied him with funds with which to travel to New York.

The ex-convict's troubles, in his determination to reform, began shortly after he reached London, in 1906. "Chicago May," whose love for Guerin had cooled, happened to run across him in the street, and promptly betrayed him to the police. In the subsequent extradition proceedings, Guerin proved that he was an English subject, and on June 14, 1907, he was released.

The very next evening while he was standing at a corner of Russell Square, a cab drove up, and a man leaped out and fired several shots, one of which struck Guerin in the foot. The assailant was "Dutch Gus" Smith, a former companion in the under-world, who had never forgiven Guerin for winning "Chicago May" away from him. Both Smith and the woman, who had been trailing Guerin in the cab all evening, were arrested and speedily convicted of attempted murder. "Dutch Gus" was sent up for life, and "Chicago May" for 15 years.

Guerin ascribes most of his subsequent difficulties with Scotland Yard to the friends of this pair. "Chicago May," whose real name is May Churchill, is one of the most notorious female criminals of Europe. Strikingly beautiful, her favorite pursuit is blackmail, and it is said that she drove several of her victims to suicide. She was regarded as a sort of queen of the under-world, and there are any number of her miserable subjects who are eager now to win her favor by "getting" Guerin.

PRISON POEMS.

THE ROSE TREE.

Outside my prison window
 A little rose tree grew;
Ah, often have I wondered
 If the little rose tree knew
Of the humble aching heart
 That lingered in the shade
Of the dreary walls and bars
 The hands of men have made.
Oh fragrant little rose tree
 With your fragrant little flowers,
How often have I watched you
 Through the sad and silent hours;
And I must frankly tell you
 For years and years I've sought
For the good and noble lessons
 Your little rose-buds taught;
And I thank you, oh, I thank you,
 And I never shall forget,
How often you have cheered me,
 Sweet rose tree—I'm glad we met.

WHO KNOWS?

Hark, hark, you who are free
 To the cry of a soul in distress,
With contrite heart I openly plea
 For a bit of your happiness.

Hark, hark, you who would hear
 Of a sad, sad soul and its pleading,
Can you look on and shed not a tear
 For the heart that is wounded and bleeding.

Hark, hark, you who have love,
 To a wretch in a lonely cell;
Perhaps you may meet him above
 Where the Lord and the Angels dwell.

PRISON POEMS.

THE SADDEST SOUL OF THEM ALL.

I arose at dawn
With a weary yawn
At the sound of the birdie's call,
And through the bars
I watched the stars
Gleam down on the grim, gray wall;
And each bright ray
Of the dawning day
Crept in through the open door
And spread its lights
Upon the sights
Of a thousand souls or more
And one sad soul was I
The saddest soul of them all.

WHY SHOULD MAN FEAR MAN?

I care not who you chance to be;
Tho' Lord or millionaire,
Governor or judge of high degree;
I fear you not and dare—
If I am right—and need no aid—
To call you fools and knaves;
Pointing to the wretched graves,
Your tyranny has made—
And fearing not, I ask—and if you can,
Answer—Why should man fear man?
Fools and knaves—for such you are;
Tho' otherwise may seem,
I point you to yon rising star
With lustrous gleam,
Ah, watch it on its upward course
Through realms of eternal space
And tell me, fools of wealth and place,
What guides it upward, what is its source?
Ah, poor fools and wretched knaves,
After all, you are but slaves,
So I ask—through life's short span—
Answer—Why should man fear man?

PRISON POEMS.

You can but take my life,
 You, too, poor fools, must die,
What matter the few short years longer you may live,
 Ere I have finished the lines here written
Thousands will pass beyond
 And thousands more will be ushered into the world—
 Fools—the very earth you tread
 Is but the dust of mingled dead,
The rich, the poor, the king, the slave,
 All shall share alike—the grave.

Yes, your turn shall come—poor fools—
And other races shall walk upon your dust
As you now walk upon the dust of those now dead;
 So why should I fear your power
 Which is really no greater than my own;
 You have taken my liberty—
 You may take my life,
 But I fear me not to die
 Nor fear the great beyond;
Ah, poor fools and knaves—I pity you,
 Slaves to lust and greed,
I hide behind gray walls my shame;
 You, poor fools, have no shame.

What care I if you should say,
 “He is but a harmless lunatic,
 “Poor fellow”—meaning me,
I may be insane—if so, what then?
 What matters that—I live and feel
And have lived longer in one small hour
Than you poor fools shall ever live;
Even behind these gray walls and bars,
 That turn earth to hideous Hell;
 I have felt keener joys
Than you poor fools can ever feel.
 So why should I fear?

PRISON POEMS.

If I obey your laws
 'Tis not because I fear,
 But because 'tis right—
 For did I not violate the "Law"
And do I not believe in law and order?
'Tis just that I should suffer for my crime
And reasonable that I should not rebel;
 Nor have I—till I am legally free,
Served the time fixed by the "Law"—
And yet I am detained, robbed of my rights;
 Now 'tis right that I should rebel.
 I have justice on my side;
Not the justice of fools and knaves,
But the great laws of Nature and the Universe.
 What is life? does any one know?
Where did it come from, where does it go?
Can the wisest man, I ask, tell why
We are born today, but tomorrow die?
Life is an organization of particles—a stage of existence;
 Temporarily conscious of its existence,
Death a decomposition and loss of consciousness,
So why should I fear? You can but take my life;
You will but sound your own death knell,
 For ere my bones have turned to dust
 You, too, poor fools, must follow me.
So why should I fear? what should I fear?
The cause is a just cause
And I have the courage of my convictions;
I can but die and 'tis better so
Than live a while in despair then die in shame at last.
So, if I must die, dear friends, farewell, farewell,
 I have no fear.

Within the great wide prison wall
 There stands a solitary tree;
The scenes on which its shadows fall
 Are ones of misery.

PRISON POEMS.

RULING ART AND DETENTION.

You ask, my friends—and I don't know who
Has a better right to know than you,
To give an opinion of a certain law;
Nor doubt my mind may hold a flaw.
Such confidence shall be appreciated
And my opinion free and fully stated.
To view a thing, we must note each part,
And in viewing find a place to start;
Had I the naming of this law you mention
I'd name it "Ruling Art and Detention."
The "Ruling Art" seems somewhat misapplied;
But 'tis nothing more than Carpet-bagging modified;
And, dear friends, while I'm revealing,
Carpet-bagging is nothing more than stealing;
The two together—"Ruling Art and Detention,"
Are what I term a legalized invention,
Invented by some master, mercenary mind,
Whose only thoughts were selfishly inclined,
Whose only wish and main desire
Is to build his pile a little higher;
Whose hands no doubt are soft to feel,
But heart, harder than the hardest steel;
Who grasp with outstretched hands the golden flood,
Whose every dollar represents an ounce of human blood;
Who, scheming for gold's bright sake,
Violates the very laws he helps to make;
And, dear friends, if we but only knew,
We'd find the thief the better man of the two.
These fools and knaves put up to represent,
A law that produces what it should prevent,
Have me at their mercy, age and more,
Hold the key that locks my very door;
But, dear friends, even, tho' I be their slave;
They, too, poor fools, must share my grave.

PRISON POEMS.

JUST TO SAY FAREWELL.

A Song.

A young man in a lonely cell sat pining the hours away ;
His heart was sad and longing while other hearts were gay ;
Long years he's been in prison, all hope for him seemed dead,
Yet he's thinking of his sweetheart, the one he'd long to wed.
The birds, the trees, the flowers, the dear old happy home
Where with his darling sweetheart he used to play and roam ;
But now he's going to write her, there from his lonely cell
And tell her that he's dying and say once more farewell.

REFRAIN.

I'm going to write you just to say farewell
For I'm sad and dying in a lonely cell ;
Oh darling do you miss me, I wonder if you do,
I could gladly die just to feel your kiss once more
 And say good-bye ;
For no one ever knew how to kiss the same as you
And tho' the years have fled and you perhaps are wed,
Yet your kisses linger still on my lips and ever will
 Darling, till I'm dead.

The maiden took the message to the Governor of the State,
With tear-stained cheeks told the story of her lover's fate ;
And when he'd read the message his tears began to flow,
For he had loved a maiden, tho' that was years ago ;
Now Summer flowers were blooming on his sweetheart's grave,
So for her sake a pardon the old man gladly gave
And bade the maid speed onward with hope and good cheer
But when she's gone, the message keeps ringing in his ear.

UNDER THE GARDEN SHADE.

A Song.

When the Winter days are over and the soft sweet breath of
 Spring
Comes to start the pretty rosebuds and the little birds to sing
'Tis then, dear heart, I miss you and I wonder if you're true
To the vows made in the garden where the roses grew.

PRISON POEMS.

REFRAIN.

I wonder if you are still waiting and true,
True to the vows we made
When skies were blue, where roses grew,
Under the garden shade.

The years have slowly passed away, I'm coming home to you,
All through the toil and hardship my heart was ever true,
Nor once have I forgotten the solemn vows we made
And sealed each one with kisses, under the garden shade.

A SONG—MY ROSA BELLE.

I dreamed a dream, a sweet fair dream, I dreamed of you
And, darling, in my dream, me thought my dream was true;
Me thought I saw you standing there, where first my love I told
The sun was shining on your head and turned your hair to gold;
I pressed your throbbing heart to mine, your love to me you tell
But as I kiss your rosebud lips, I wake in a lonely cell.

REFRAIN.

My Rosa Belle, I dream of you
Your love you tell, I dream 'tis true,
And in my dreams, your sweet face seems
To linger near my lonely cell
To keep me cheer, my Rosa Belle;
Oh, will you wait, outside the gate
When my time is o'er, sweet Rosa Belle.

I dreamed a dream, another dream, of you sweet Rosa Belle,
And in my dream me thought you stood before my lonely cell;
Oh tell me sweetheart, darling Rose, will my dreams come true,
When my time is over will I be the same to you?
Oh meet me, little sweetheart, at the prison door,
For, darling, in each dream I love you more and more.

I dreamed again of you sweet Rose, dreamed the years had fled;
My heart was filled with sadness, for darling you were dead;
But then, I'm only dreaming in my lonely cell,
And, darling, how I love you word can never tell;
Oh tell me little sweetheart, when my time is o'er
Will I find you waiting at the prison door.

PRISON POEMS.

A SONG—GOOD-BYE OLD PRISON CHUM.

In a dark and lonely cell behind an iron-barred gate
Two young men linger, in silence sadly wait;
Their hearts are bound in friendship, their aim in life is one,
To gain a place in freedom beneath the glowing sun;
But one day a pardon came and one must go away
And as he leaves, to his friend, his comrades hear him say—

CHORUS.

Good-bye old prison chum, for I must leave;
Good-bye, old fellow, for you I'll grieve;
And where'er I stray, be it near or far away,
My thoughts shall always be with you,
Nor will I forget the dreary place we met—
Good-bye, old prison chum, good-bye to you.

The young man stood in freeland outside the iron-barred gate,
But his heart was filled with sadness and all seemed desolate,
For the only friend he had in all the world that day
Was the gentle youth that lingered behind the walls of gray;
But then he could not help him, so turning with a sigh,
He bade his dear old comrade once more good-bye.

Now the years have slowly sped, the young men both are free;
They've built a home and happiness in freedom o'er the sea
Where no one knows their past nor will ever know
The dreary years they spent in prison long ago;
But often by their fireside when beams the evening stars
They live again in memory behind the cold steel bars.

Behind the shaded walls they have confined
My weary flesh and bone
But no, they ne'er can keep my mind
Behind ten thousand walls of stone.



PRISON POEMS.

YOU AND I—THE CONVICT'S STORY.

Extract From a Most Remarkable Book to Be Published Shortly in
Erie Is Worthy of Serious Study and Careful Consideration.

What It Costs One Who Has Done Time to Live Square
Afterwards—Will This Man, Living Right Here in
Erie, Go Out in the Woods With His Faithful
Wife and Starve? He Says He Will.

[EDITOR'S NOTE—Living in Erie is an ex-convict. His record is known. He has a story to tell. He tells it well and he has the proof to substantiate what he says about himself. He is publishing a book and it will be out shortly. It is a most remarkable work. There are a number of Erie people who have heard the man's story, who have seen his proofs of what he claims. He contends that, having been a convict, he is hounded continually and is unable to make an honest living for himself and wife. He is determined to live honestly or starve. He discusses a vital social question in a way that will cause the reader to pause and reflect.]

The following article was written at a time when the author was worried and had very little balance—nor does he claim to be real well balanced now. He is struggling to better his condition, to gain balance and learn truth, to survive and come up to a certain moral standard.

The way is dark but he shall win. It is the writer's intention to start an organization called "The Humane Workers' Society," to help erase the awful condition now existing, to better humanity in general, and would be glad to hear from any one who is interested in such a movement.

You can help by sending suggestions, by personal service or financially.

You read these lines. How do you read these lines? By impressions made upon the organ of sight. From the organ of sight the impressions are carried to the faculty of reason where they are analyzed. Right now that process is going on in your brain and you understand what I have written. Now the impressions are being carried on to the memory where they are retained for future use. Similarity revives these impressions and so we recall and have our being.

All we know is according to the impressions made upon our five senses at some time or other during our life.

We are intelligent and educated according to the number and kind of impressions made upon our faculties through our five senses.

PRISON POEMS.

We are superstitious, prejudiced, narrow-minded, etc., because of wrong impressions that have become fixed on our faculties through wrong teaching and bad association. These can only be erased by right teaching and good association.

The hereditary effects, morally, of ten generations, can be changed in one generation by environment and conditions.

A man can be both right and wrong. Right according to the laws of nature and wrong according to the standard we gauge the world by. But there is no perfect harmony for a man who is right by nature if he's wrong by laws of man. There are natural laws; there must be laws by man, and even though those laws are unjust, man must obey them. There must be men to make laws; men to enforce these laws, and if there were no men to break them, we wouldn't need any laws. So the law breaker is a main factor in our great scheme of law and order and when the law breaker and the law enforcer recognize the work in harmony with the law breaker they will find a solution to the great problem.

Even a correct answer to a simple sum in arithmetic can not be worked out if one little cipher is left out. How, then, can you solve the greatest problem on earth today, by leaving out the one great main factor, the law breaker.

You have your great prison congress, your laws, etc., but all you really do is to treat your law breaker like you do your pigs and cattle. You build a pen around him, feed and keep the wind off and then he's what? Turned loose after he's good for nothing to be hounded till you round him up in the cattle pen again. I'm not blaming you. You are not to blame. But you are blaming me. You are penning me up, you are hounding me when I'm out of the pen. You call me an ex-convict. Debar me from the rights you say I have. How do you do this? By the conditions you make. How do you make these conditions? Read the clipping I insert from one of your papers:

ARE GIVEN LASHES ON BARE BACK IN ZERO WEATHER FOR THEIR CRIMES.

WILMINGTON, Del., Jan. 13.—With arms tied to the extended arms of a cross and with backs bared to the zero gale, two men were mercilessly lashed in the court yard of the county workhouse here today, as part payment of the toll the State exacts for their crimes.

John Brewington received forty lashes with a cat-o'-nine-tails, in addition to which he will serve two years in state's prison for highway robbery.

Arthur Johnson received twenty lashes and will serve one year for larceny.

PRISON POEMS.

The men suffered frightfully from the cold and from the blood-letting lashes and staggered semi-conscious, back to their cells. The whippings, as are all Delaware whippings, were public, and a morbid crowd stood against the prison walls and saw the heavy leather strap with its nine thongs cut deep into the quivering flesh of the wretches.

The men were to have been lashed early today, but the two degrees above zero weather chilled Warden Crawford himself to such an extent that he postponed the whipping until the day warmed.

In the afternoon, when a four-degree rise in the temperature was noted, Crawford bundled himself up in a fur-lined overcoat, put on heavy gloves and ordered the men brought out.

Each wore a heavy blanket wrapped about his neck and hanging down across his chest, but his back was nude. The prisoners' hands were encased in gloves as their extended arms were lashed to the cross, but the winds bit and the snow pelted against their naked backs.

Brewington was whipped first. The back, blue from the cold, shivered and shook as the first blow of the strap fell, cutting bloody welts straight across. Ten times the scourge fell, straight down, and ninety livid welts showed on his quivering back. Then by moving his position, Warden Crawford made the strap strike at an angle. Ten blows thus, and the angle was changed, until, when the forty cruel blows had landed, a perfect grill of embossed flesh, torn and bruised, showed across the wretch's back. Not a sound did Brewington utter, though his lips were bleeding from the bites he gave as the scourge swished through the air and he stiffened himself for the coming pain.

His arms were freed and he staggered back from the cross. Guards seized him. Without washing away the blood, they drew a heavy, coarse woolen undershirt over his body and rushed him, half frozen, back to his cell.

Johnson, nude to the waist, stood by all the while, shivering from the cold and fright; involuntarily he braced himself as each blow landed on Brewington's shoulders, as though he could feel the pain himself. Then, when Brewington's torture was ended, Johnson was led to the cross, pilloried and lashed.

But the above article is humane compared to the writer's own case. I do not relate my story because you would laugh at me in scorn. You would not believe me.

If you follow the writer in his writing, you may learn something of that peculiar phase of human existence where man must struggle against heredity, early environment and old association; even more and yet remains honest, leading as clean a moral life as man can live.

"You shall leave that 'snip' of a girl and come back to me or I will drive you either to starvation or crime."

PRISON POEMS.

These words were uttered by a woman, whose resources are worth millions, to an ex-convict recently discharged from prison. A woman beautiful, educated, with a wide worldly experience and a criminal brain, who handles most judges and police officials as a nurse would a baby; even with less trouble.

No blood hound was ever more persistent or kept the track better than does this beautiful feminine species of mankind. As a cat plays with a mouse does this lady play with her human prey.

The above lines may sound more like a page from a dime novel than a part of a truthful statement by a man, who, when you read these lines, may have passed out into the great beyond.

This woman with her polished manners and soft, soothing ways, walks on the laws of America, using its representatives and society to hound and persecute an honest man and an innocent girl.

And you don't believe it! Such a thing could not be so! But it is. You are blinded by the very truth you fail to recognize. But I, the ex-convict, the outcast, the one whom you deny the right to happiness and life, shall be your physician; shall restore your sight. Not because I am smarter than you, but because I am humble and seek the truth where I may find it, and from a non-personal viewpoint. The lowly approach nearest the truth because the truth is found in low places.

You in your elevated stations of life, with your lofty conceptions of God and the Universe, that God created all things for your special benefit, are deluded by your own self importance. You walk on the truth, but do not know it.

God—an idea, supernatural, that conveys to mortal mind that something which he can not understand, but which he feels must exist or he himself would not exist.

Down on my humble knees I worship that God—first by acknowledging that I do not know, that I can not know, that I will not attempt to know that which is beyond by understanding—complete submission. I therefore seek to understand the forces within my own being which will enable me to recognize the truth when I find it; a small portion, at least. Some one said:

“He that is down need fear no fall,
He that is low no pride.
And he that is humble ever shall
Have Truth to be his guide.”

So I seek the truth in the low places, for you in your lofty stations have not found it.

In order to learn the truth about any particular thing, we must first eliminate all prejudice and personal interest and look the thing square in the face. I may add the simpler we are in our methods, the

PRISON POEMS.

more progress we can make toward discovering the truth and the easier can we prescribe a remedy. To get the best results one must be frank and open, with a complete disregard for public opinion.

The writer of this article is an ex-convict who is having more than the usual struggle. He deserved the time he served and admits it. Is free now and in the face of some very disagreeable facts, which may follow, don't care a "rip" what you think of him and his crude expression.

This article is a cold, hard, steel proposition, written as a last resource to gain an honest livelihood, to keep the wolf of "want" from the door. It seems to be his last chance.

The writer and his wife lived on 25 cents a day for the last two weeks. Twenty-five cents has even gone two days. At the rate of 25 cents per day, they may live fourteen days more.

When one may have only fourteen days more to live, he loses all fear of public opinion and has no motive to lie and is more apt to state facts as they appear to him—to express his thoughts as they really are than those trained and educated whose business it is to furnish the public with information on various topics—than judges and police officials, who think within a radius of their jurisdiction, and ministers who live within a radius of twenty-five miles and judge the entire world by the standard they gaze that radius by.

At the end of fourteen days should circumstances compel him to either steal or starve, he shall starve.

But what about the beautiful young wife, who gave up a home of wealth and luxury to wed him, the ex-convict, and knowing all? She—one of you—shall she die? Yes!

Does she love him, this monster, the convict? Yes, better than he ever dreamed a woman could love, and because he loves her, they shall die.

Yes, we will die! "Oh, what nonsense!"

But it must seem strange to you that we should wish to plunge into the Great Beyond?

We do not desire. We are compelled. We do not fear. It is her will to share my fate and she would have me remain true to her ideal, and I shall.

After all, perhaps, 'tis better so, for you shall know the truth and the generation that comes will profit by the example.

Our whole scheme of existence is based on two great principles, Life and Death. Why should one fear to pass into the Great Beyond? What matter the few short years longer I might live, if by dying now I accomplish a purpose and that purpose be the giving to the world the truth that may solve a problem the law, the church and society have failed to solve since the beginning of time? Could I really do better?

PRISON POEMS.

We, ourselves, are a part of the very forces that make possible our own existence. We all came from the same place, because there was no other place to come from, and we shall all go back to the same place, because there is no other place for us to go—the Universe. All any of us can really know is that we don't know, and when we think we do know, then is when we delude ourselves.

Perhaps all that I have said is the product of a diseased brain, driven mad by constant hounding by old associates who seek to bring me back to the old life, who dog me night and day, causing me to fail in every new enterprise I undertake, pointing me out to the police and my new associates.

So my only hope lays in the very article I am writing. Should it have no value to the magazine I am sending it to—well—we have fourteen days longer to live and during that time we shall have lived longer and felt keener, sweeter, joys than most people do in a lifetime.

And, when the time comes, we shall wander out into the beautiful snow, to the woods we both love so well. There you will find us in the spring, when the snow has melted away and the birds have returned from the sunny South, there midst the birth of new life shall you find us locked in each other's arms—that part which we call life will have returned back to the source from whence it came, but we shall live—live as a monument to the truth we died to prove.

Along with us you will find this article which no editor would accept, that had no value until two human lives were given to prove its sincerity, its reality. The last forlorn hope of two blundering children of nature who blundered on to the truth through their folly and your persecution.

Oh, but you shall know. The article that had no value will become valuable. The editors that refused it will clamor for it. The newspapers will print and reprint it, and I, the hounded, the convict that you would not give a fair show, shall become your teacher. And the brave, noble-hearted little girl who gave her sweet young life that I might live up to her ideal shall become an example—a sacrifice to the good in a man the world could not see.

But we still live and hope, so I shall continue my ravings.

I love this old world. I hate no one. Not even those who have pointed the finger of scorn and said: "He's an ex-convict! Don't trust him!" I don't blame you. How can I. Like myself, you are the product of the surrounding conditions. I would even kiss the finger you point in scorn. Not because I am a coward! I fear nothing, not even the Great Beyond, but in the spirit of sympathy, with a bleeding, sorrowing heart, for I once thought as you do. I once hated you as you hate me, the ex-convict.

PRISON POEMS.

Oh, but I was wrong. Now that I seem so near the Great Beyond, I see things so differently. You and I—we are what the environment and conditions made us. I love you, but I hate the conditions that made you hate me. You are no more responsible for hating me than I am for loving you. Why should I retaliate? The whole conception is false.

Is the flower seed dropped by the wayside into unfertile soil, growing up among vile weeds, any more responsible for its puniness than is the seed planted in some king's fertile garden, receiving care and cultivation, that grows into a beautiful flower, rich in color and sweet in fragrance?

To find the cause as to why one is puny and undergrown and the others beautiful and strong, would you look at the flower or the surrounding conditions? To remove the cause would you use the hoe on the poor, puny flower or the ground and weeds? Might not the puny flower become strong and beautiful if transplanted in the king's garden and cultivated with care?

The flower that was rich in color and which gave forth such sweet perfume was compelled to grow sweet and strong. It knew no other way. Surrounding conditions made them both what they were; one strong and the other weak and under grown.

In the king's garden one dare not walk on the flower bed. By the wayside one tramples as much as he pleases.

When you and I quit fighting and abusing one another and unite in fighting the surrounding conditions, cutting the weeds, cultivating the soil and watering the flowers, we may make the puny flower strong and beautiful and the beautiful flower more beautiful.

You are the flower (figuratively) in the king's garden. I am the one by the wayside. You look on me from your luxurious height, but it was your seed that the wind blew over the garden wall out by the wayside and in denying me the sunshine and allowing the weeds to smother out my poor life, you blight your own life and that of the generation to follow.

By hating and abusing me you approach no nearer the truth. The problem you seek to solve will only be solved by love and co-operative thought and action.

When you recognize that I am a factor and you recognize me in your scheme of things, you may then solve a problem that when solved will make earth a paradise.

An intelligent man who has served a term in prison is better qualified to be sent to prison congress than ministers and judges. Most men are honest with themselves, but where others' interests are involved are not so careful.

PRISON POEMS.

THE CONVICT'S WIFE AND CHILD.

It is they who suffer most—who need our help even more than the man himself.

Often they suffer for food—sometimes the little ones die for lack of medical attention.

The woman is blamed by her neighbors for her husband's sins.

Instead of aiding her they persecute her. The other mothers will not allow their children to play with her children. The little ones are teased: "Oh, go on; your daddy's in the penitentiary, our Ma's don't want us to play with you."

If she goes to church, everyone stares at her. I have seen Christian women hold up their skirts and draw away from the wife of a convict as they passed her in church.

I have heard them say: "Isn't it terrible; she ought to be ashamed to put her head inside a church door."

Oh, my dear readers, how wrong some of us are in our attitude toward others.

The man may have been bad, but his wife and children are just as good as any of us and better than the man or woman who points the finger of score at them.

THE HUMANE WORKERS' SOCIETY, ERIE, PA.

General Public:

To every one desiring to better conditions that make bad men and women, poverty and crime.

Do you wish to better conditions which you know to exist, that are bad?

Do you approve of helping the coming generations; making the way clearer?

Would you approve of a man who has been in prison being at the head of The Humane Workers' Society, one who knows why men are criminals, who can feel and understand as they do, who has had their emotions and desires? Who can think as they do; because he has been one of them.

Would you endorse a man of this order, did you feel that he has been cured of his criminal tendencies and wishes to make amend by devoting his life to making men and conditions better?

The Humane Workers' Society is to be an organization which aims to co-operate with churches, society and the law in an effort to better the conditions that endanger our lives, homes and property.

We cannot do much for the man and woman who has already fallen, but we can better the conditions that make them fall, so that the coming generations will not fall. Your children and mine and their children.



PRISON POEMS.

There are organizations to better the present generation. Why not one to better the coming?

If an individual wrongs me and I kill him, I haven't bettered the matter. There will still remain thousands who would do the same thing he did, but if I can better the conditions that make such people, I will have accomplished something worth while.

When creeds, organizations and individuals quit fighting one another and unite in fighting the conditions, we will have then accomplished what we aim to accomplish by fighting one another. We aim to better conditions but we really produce the very thing we aim to prevent, by our wrong methods.

You have been trained and educated along some line of business or profession and have been successful according to your understanding of certain principles.

Inasmuch as you know your line of business or profession, I feel that I know mine. I could no more handle your affairs than you could handle mine. We are specialists, each in our own field.

I require your services every day of my life. I pay you for them. You require mine and should be willing to pay me. What you pay me comes back to you with interest through those who follow in your footsteps.

We can help one another. You can not give your time. Besides, you would not know what to do. But you can give your financial aid and in return I shall better the conditions that endanger us both and our children to come. You store up wealth that your children may be provided for, you build schools that they may be educated, but you neglect to better the awful conditions which you know to exist, that are making criminals and moral perverts of the present generation.

The welfare of the coming generations depends upon the surrounding conditions we leave behind us.

Crime is a disease that warps and disfigures the poor victim's mind until he feels justified in his crimes.

The remedy that will cure this awful disease has never been discovered by Judges, Ministers or Policemen. They have failed. They have their places. They all pronounced me incurable. They have all treated me according to their best knowledge and their remedies failed.

If you approve of my office and have confidence in my integrity and ability, will you contribute to the support of "The Humane Workers' Society" and its founder?

What will you give to start it, and what will you pledge to maintain it?

EDWARD L. ALLEN,
208 East Eleventh Street, Erie, Pa.



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